



# SOCIAL ACTION

*News Views*  
*Books Reviews*

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## WHAT IS SOCIALISM?

It is really difficult to find a definition of Socialism that will win universal approbation. Perhaps the reason is that Socialism is more a matter of the heart than of the head; more on the level of fierce emotion than on that of cold reasoning. Indeed, in its initial stages, Socialism stemmed essentially from a sense of burning resentment against the social injustices and stark poverty of the working class that resulted from the Industrial Revolution and the Capitalist system, as it functioned in the 19th Century. But Socialism was not confined purely and entirely to the social and economic sphere. The early Socialists soon realised that the non-interference in economic affairs advocated by the Liberal State lent powerful support to capitalist exploitation. They roundly condemned such callousness on the part of the

state and called for a change in the very institution of government. It can be asserted that it was Karl Marx who gave the Socialists an integrated system of thought and action that outlined an economic policy, a political theory, and a philosophy of life. But from its inception, there have been diverse currents in the Socialist camp so that a single definition of the movement utterly fails to describe it adequately.

### *Traditional Socialism*

The basic inspiration of Socialism may be said to have been primarily the disparate emotional ideals of liberty of the individual and equality of all citizens; the right of the worker to the full product of his work; the obligation of the state to safeguard the interests of those in need, oppression and misfortune; and finally, the belief in co-opera-

tion, as against competition, in industrial life. All through the 19th Century, when the evils of Capitalism were patent, such emotions and ideals had ample scope for rousing the conscientious citizen to a sense of burning indignation against the economic and political regimes that could preserve and tolerate such injustice. But after the second world war, with the spread of social security and the attainment of full employment, accompanied by the extraordinary prosperity of the countries where Socialism was born, the changed circumstances have robbed traditional Socialist slogans of their mythical significance. As M. Raymond Aron has observed, "Socialism has ceased in the West to be a myth, because it has become a part of reality."

### **Differences**

Despite its common fundamental inspiration, Socialism has been conditioned to a large extent by the temperament of the people and the economic development of the country where it grew to maturity. This accounts for the absence of any fundamental agreement on the social goals and the means to

achieve them. For instance in England, the Owenites never spoke of class war; they favoured rather a co-operative organisation of industry, with property held in common and all labour treated as of equal status. It was Marx who introduced the notion of class war, prophesied the destruction of the Capitalist owner of property, and the triumph of the classless society of workers, after the withering away of the state. The Fabians criticised Marx bitterly. They did not demand the destruction of the liberal state as it existed, but expected social reform to take place through the prevailing capitalist media. On the other hand in France, the Socialist movement was deeply influenced by the ideals of the French Revolution. Proudhon was a liberal Socialist who urged not the suppression of capital, but only the elimination of capitalist exploitation. He believed in the dignity of human labour, required Government to be superseded by an economic organism that would lead to true industrial democracy. Saint-Simon in similar vein, argued for a central organ to regulate economic life, and tried to erect a new humanitarian religion



to replace Christianity that had betrayed its principles. Fourier, on the contrary, was not for the establishment of a general plan and leadership from above, but rather the building of fundamental social units at the base, and the channeling of economic activity through spontaneous co-operative associations. In Germany, Socialism began as an abstract theory that was at once a moral protest and a religious hope rather than the battle cry of an organised class. There was criticism of the former feudal regime and later on, of the new capitalist system that had taken its place.

### ***Recent Developments***

To obtain a clearer understanding of present-day trends in Socialism it is better to view it under a threefold aspect:

- Socialism as an economic instrument to achieve social goals.
- Socialism as a political ideology.
- Socialism as a philosophy of humanism, or a kind of mystique.

### ***An Economic Instrument***

To many people Socialism is mainly an economic instrument to achieve certain desirable goals, such as a higher standard of living for all, equal opportunity, a higher level of democratic functioning in both public and private, administrative and industrial enterprise, a diminution in the inequality of incomes, etc. Four characteristic features are claimed to mark off modern Socialism from other types of social systems.

- the primary function of the economy is to satisfy human needs
- this can best be achieved by means of centralised planning
- public or state ownership should replace private ownership particularly in regard to the means of production
- full employment and social security must be guaranteed to all.

#### ***(1) The satisfaction of human needs***

The stress on human needs is due to the fact that an economy based on the Liberal system implying non-intervention of the State in eco-

nomic affairs, only led in the past to vast inequalities and the satisfaction of the demand for luxurious living by the propertied few, while the most urgent needs of a great majority of the citizens went unsatisfied. But practically every state in the modern world actively intervenes on behalf of its weaker citizens and attempts to provide everyone with a certain minimum. How this objective of satisfying human needs is characteristic of Socialism is not so clear today.

## *(2) A Centrally Directed Economy*

In the modern world varying degrees of central control over the national economy are found to exist in different states. In the USSR, a totalitarian type of planning that covers the entire economic life of the nation has been in existence since 1921 when the 'New Economic Policy' was adopted. In other Communist countries, similar efforts at completely integrated planning have been attempted. But in the Netherlands for instance there is the Central Planning Bureau that keeps close watch on the economy, outlines the areas of possible

and desirable economic expansion, but leaves the achievement of these goals in the hands of private agencies. In other European countries and in the United States, it is through the control over the monetary system and the annual budget that the Government directs the economy in the direction it desires. Government income and expenditure has become so huge and Government managed institutions in a welfare state so large that the national economy is vitally affected by Government policy, even in the absence of any explicit planning.

It is obvious that planning of the Marxian type conflicts directly with the liberty of the citizen, and modern socialism that is democratically inclined would tend to repudiate such integrated planning. But a planned economy that respects the rights of the citizens would certainly form an important element in any Socialist society.

Socialism counted many disciples during the present century especially after the first world war and the great depression of the thirties. But the rise of National So-

cialism under Hitler in Germany caused an agonising re-appraisal of Socialist principles, and after the second world war, there has been taking place a fundamental revision of the system.

Hence the question has been asked: Is it possible to have a system in which central planning and individual freedom can co-exist? The situation in our own country provides the answer. One may safely assert that provided the limits of the two sectors, the public and private, are clearly chalked, and there is a determination to maintain the private sector, some modified central planning is compatible with free enterprise. The impact of Government investment has not been so great as to deprive the private sector of its initiative and free choice, through the area has been narrowed considerably.

### (3) *State Ownership versus Private Ownership*

Marxian Socialism demands that all instruments of production must be placed in the hands of the State. Experience however shows that even behind the Iron Curtain, for instance in Poland, the col-

lectives have been practically abandoned, the peasants now owning their farms and working them to satisfy the market demand and not state requirements. Moreover in the capitalist regimes, the ownership of property has been divorced from its management. A new managerial class has sprung up. It is therefore the control and direction of employment of capital, rather than its ownership, that interests Socialists other than those of the Marxian brand.

### (4) *Full Employment and Social Security*

It is quite common in the advanced industrial countries, for instance in the U.K., to find social security well established and full employment achieved due at present to an acute shortage of labour. This goal of Socialism can become the goal of other types of regimes as well. But not everyone in the U.K. is satisfied with the Welfare State, because it restricts individual initiative, makes the citizen irresponsible, and is very costly.

## ***Socialism as a Political Doctrine***

The political ideology of Socialism is very closely connected with its basic economic assumptions. Marxian Socialism holds that nothing good can come out of the Capitalist state. It must be overthrown and replaced by the Communist Party representing the workers. The Party will ultimately disappear and the supreme power will be transferred into the hands of the workers. This is an idyllic picture that has lost much of its glamour after the experience of the Communist dictators like Stalin, Khrushchev and Mao-Tse-Tung. The so-called democratic socialists outside Russia and China reject such totalitarian regimes with horror, but are as much against the liberal regimes, embodied in a parliamentary or presidential system of government. Their opposition to totalitarianism is understandable. But they have no very clear alternative to offer in place of our prevailing democratic forms of government. A supreme authority is necessary in every state if law and order is to be maintained. Unfortunately the Socialists are not clear

enough when they refer to the central authority in whose hands productive property should vest.

Several trends are discernible. The older Socialists were in favour of co-operative associations, others for the collective body of citizens and still others for a semblance of an industrial parliament. Many were anti-state, and foresaw the dangers of an omnipotent bureaucracy; but others hoped to work through the media of the Capitalist institutions. No agreed formula can be found. But it is obvious that under the influence of Socialism, the state has tended to interfere in the economic, social and cultural life of its subjects. The welfare state is one offshoot of Socialist ideology.

## ***Socialism as a Philosophy and a Mystique***

Marxian Socialism or Communism is the most highly developed form of philosophical Socialism. It has its own metaphysic and attempts to formulate an integrated systematic explanation of man's existence and history. It is essentially materialist and atheist in outlook, explains the historical sequence

by the blind determination of economic forces, working on the model of the dialectic, stresses class warfare, the rise of the proletariat and its ultimate triumph. None of the other brands of Socialism have as complete and systematised an explanation of human existence to offer. But they do believe in certain values and possess an outlook that is common. Thus in spite of their diversity, they all accept, explicitly or implicitly, the value of the human person, as a free, responsible being whose actions do affect the flow of history. It is also part of the Socialistic tradition to insist on the brotherhood of man, on fellowship, service of others and a kind of altruism.

Further one may even speak of a Socialist humanism that has developed in opposition to the individualism and rationalism of the 18th Century. The Socialists hold in high esteem *man the worker* and the *social man* or human solidarity. But Marx too laid stress on these values. In fact there is not much distinction between Socialist and Marxian humanism, so strong has been the influence of Marx's ideas on the development of Socialism.

For some Socialists, Socialism has become a religion. Thus the French Socialists, Blum and Moch, could both assert that to them Socialism was a kind of faith, a faith based on human justice and not on divine revelation. These may be exaggerations, but they reveal how Socialism does possess in itself a power of attraction that has caught the enthusiastic adherence of many highly intellectual and devoted men. Unfortunately, no moral or religious values can be supported on a foundation of atheism, or religious indifferentism. In spite of the Marxian profession of humanism, the Soviet man is a slave of the state, as most Socialists outside the Iron Curtain would grudgingly admit.

### ***In India***

The following pages in this issue will discuss the problem of Socialism in India at the present time. Much of the same confusion regarding the precise connotation of the term 'Socialism' exists in our country. Both the Congress, and the Praja Socialist Party claim to be Socialist in inspiration and advocate similar measures for social advancement. It is to be hoped that apart from party quarrels

over the precise nature of Socialism and the scoring of electoral advantages, the followers of both parties will be sincerely inspired by the ethical ideals of social justice, and respect for human personality in the true and deeper sense that is required for free men to give of their best to society. On the other hand, a blind rejection of moral and religious values and a belief in the omniscience of the

state have already resulted in the growth of tyranny, persecution and the loss of human freedom. It is not for these goals that Socialism was invented. And it will be a pity if the only consequence of Socialism should be the perpetuation of slavery, the negation of freedom and the denial of opportunities to men to develop themselves fully: physically, mentally and spiritually.

# RECENT TRENDS IN EUROPEAN SOCIALISM

C. Conte

In 1945, after World War II, was over, it was generally believed that the future of the world belonged to Marxist and non-Marxist Socialism. The political situation of Western Europe and the changes imposed in Eastern Europe were the basis for such a forecast. Fifteen years later however, the prophecy is far from being fulfilled. In Berlin, in Budapest, in Warsaw, the people have demonstrated that they do not accept Marxist Socialism as practised in Russia. These uprisings and the defection of large numbers to the West have had their repercussions on Western Europe. They have aroused searching auto-criticism in the Communist world, and pronounced uncertainty among the non-Communist socialists. This latter phenomenon, so evident in Western European Social-

ism, has been dubbed the 'Socialist Crisis'.

It should be remembered of course that any crisis in Socialism very rarely affects the loyalty among the masses who support the party. Socialist leadership in England, Germany, and most probably in France, have no fear of losing their loyal and traditional followers at the polls, though it is true that since 1950 they have formed the opposition in the lower house. The Labour Party, for instance which had won the elections in 1945, was unseated in the year 1951, and the elections of 1955 and 1959 failed to place it back in power.

This however has not been the most important element in the crisis of Socialism. What is most significant is the fact that the content of So-

cialism itself has been subjected to a profound re-examination and transformation in the major Western European countries of England, Germany, Belgium, France,

Austria, Sweden, Denmark and Holland. The present article discusses the 'transformation' in the major European countries of England, Germany, and France.

## GERMANY

After the fall of the German Empire in November 1918 the Social Democratic Party, that had been deeply infiltrated by Communists before and during the World War I, came into Power. During the years of the great depression after 1930 the S. P. D. lost only a few votes but its influence was considerably weakened due to the growing attraction of Nazism and Communism. During the period of the Third Reich the Party was dissolved along with all other democratic organizations. Members, however, succeeded in maintaining contact with each other and speedily reconstructed the Party in 1945, after World War II. The division of Germany prevented the formation of a single unit and party control was split between Otto Grotewohl in the eastern zone and Kurt Schumacher in the western zone.

Under the guidance of Kurt Schumacher, the S. P. D. played an important role in the reconstruction of a democratic state during the years 1946 — 1948 in the three western sectors. In the 1949 elections, of the 402 seats available, 131 were won by the S. P. D. Their position has steadily improved, and today the Party controls a little over one-third of Parliament and has become a minority sufficiently strong to prevent any change in the Constitution.

### *The New Programme*

The ideological evolution of the S. P. D. is characterised above all by the debate on Marxism. Kurt Schumacher in 1945 made it clear that "Marxism is a method of sociological and political knowledge and not an edifice of dogmatic principles". By his death in 1952 the Party lost its ideological orientation to



some extent and this necessitated a new fundamental programme, which was only formulated in 1959 at Bad Godesberg. This programme, which was subject to long previous discussions, is delineated in the following chapter headings :—

The Fundamental Values of Socialism.

The Fundamental Postulates for a Society Befitting Man

The Organization of the State.

Economical and Social Organisation

Cultural Life

International Community.

The preamble notes :—

"These are the contradictions of our time : man has let loose the elemental power of the atom and now he is afraid of its consequences ; man has developed to the greatest extent productive forces and amassed enormous wealth without giving to all a just share in what has been produced by common efforts ; man has subjected the earth and has reduced the distances which separate the continents, but now rigid and strongly armed

blocks divide the people more than before, and totalitarian systems threaten their freedom...".

In the face of these dilemmas there stands forth the hope of man to preserve peace, democracy and liberty. The text continues :

"...we men are called to solve such contradictions. In our hands has been placed the responsibility of a happy future or of auto-destruction. Only through a new and better order of society can man open the way to his freedom. This new and better order is the aim of Democratic Socialism..."

An attentive analysis of this preamble alone undoubtedly reveals implications of great importance. The heredity of classical marxism is evident, in particular in the fundamental concept of helping man to progress towards his historical development, understood as an earthly ideal, and the accomplishment of this through the mere reform of the social structure. At the same time it is clear that one of the fundamental dogmas of classical Marxism, viz. that economic factors are the unique forces that deter-

mine world history, has been debunked. The risk of man going morally bankrupt while tending towards historical development is admitted without hesitation. The ideal future is formulated in terms so generic that no one is able to recognise its dependence on the utopian vision of Marx's classless society.

### ***Fundamental Values***

In the chapter "The Fundamental Values of Socialism", freedom, justice and solidarity are specified as the fundamental values of Socialism:

"Democratic Socialism, which is rooted in Europe in Christian Ethics, in humanism and in classic philosophy, has no intention of pronouncing any final truths.... out of respect for the religious choices of man; for neither a political party nor the State are competent in this field. The S. P. D. is the party of freedom of spirit. It is a community of men of various currents of faith and thought. The daily duty of Socialism is to fight for liberty and justice and to preserve and actuate them in themselves..."

Here again we see the rejection of the traditional

marxist doctrine which posits a mechanistic conception of life as the basis of a determined social order and adequate to solve any problem. But what is more evident and significant here is the invitation to Christians to collaborate in the party side by side with non-Christians, without any prejudice to their conscience.

In the chapter — Fundamental Postulates — there is an appeal for an international juridical order (war must not be an instrument of politics), the affirmation of solidarity with the underdeveloped countries, the rejection of Communism. New and revolutionary for Socialism is the proposition:

"Freedom and justice cannot be secured through institutions alone. All the sectors of life are progressively organising with the tempo of technology, and consequently new forms of inter-dependence are coming into being which threaten that very liberty. Only a very diverse economic, social and cultural life will stimulate the creative energies of the individual, without which any spiritual life withers..."

### **Changed Party Policy**

The following passages from "Social and Economic Order" are indicative of a change in Party policy and the rejection of certain other basic marxist principles :

"...Totalitarian and coercive economy destroys freedom. Therefore the S.P.D. defends the free market in so far as it is consonant with true free competition. But where the markets come under the control of a few individuals or groups, then norms of a different kind are needed to preserve the freedom of the economy..."

"...Collective property is a legitimate form of public control which no modern State renounces. It helps to defend freedom in the face of very powerful economic groups.... The main problem today is economic power. Where it is not possible to secure by other means a sound economic order, collective property is both desirable and necessary..."

While it is true that these ideas have recurred again and again in international socialist discussions, there is a novelty in the fact that they are now made a part of the fundamental programme of the

S. P. D. For instance, it is stated that

"...The right to the private possession of the means of production is a right to be protected and encouraged, in the proportion that it does not conflict with the development of a just social order. Medium and small business men, if efficient, must be strengthened in order to be able to withstand the competition of the big enterprises..."

The right to the private possession of land by farmers is recognised. This needs no comment. The programme also endorses medium and small farming enterprises for increased production consonant with the independence of the farmers, the right of all citizens to medical assistance and medicines and to pensions.

### **Religion and Church**

A lot of interest was aroused, specially among Catholics, by the chapter — The Cultural Life — which deals with religion and the Church. It expressly states :

"...Only a reciprocal tolerance among persons of different faiths and beliefs, based

on a respect for a common human dignity, can constitute a solid basis for a fruitful human and political life together. Socialism is not a substitute for religion. The Social-democratic Party respects the churches, religious communities, their special mission and their autonomy; they have a right to public protection; and the Party is always ready to collaborate with the Churches and religious communities on a basis of freedom and equality. Liberty of thought, of faith, and of conscience, and freedom of expression must be protected. A religious message and philosophical vision of the world should not be used for political objectives of a particular party or an anti-democratic aim..."

In the debate on the Programme, there was strong opposition to this formula. A non-Christian objected that the fundamental programme should not give the impression that the socialist movement had its origin from the pulpits of the Churches and the chairs of the Universities. It was further observed that the programme should not specify an acknowledgment of the mission of the Churches but only respect for it—which

suggestion, was as a matter of fact, accepted.

The President of the Party, Erich Ollenhauer, in his general report at the beginning of the congress did not touch at all the question of the Churches. During the discussion Dr. Adolf Arnt, jurist and delegate at the Bundestag, and one of the most brilliant intellectuals of the S. P. D. illustrated the concept of tolerance which is the basis of the programme, namely, that he who finds the source and the most intimate support of his life in freedom, should also defend the freedom to be an unbeliever. This does not imply indifference to truth and error, but means that one acknowledges unconditionally the equality of rights for all men.

Dr. Gustav Heinemann, jurist and an outstanding member of the Evangelical Churches concludes the discussion on this topic as follows :

"...When during the last century the workers began their fight for civil equality to obtain better social conditions, it happened, unfortunately, that the Churches left them alone, and in some cases even opposed

them in the social and political struggle. Among us, I hope, this chapter is coming to an end. We resisted and we must always resist the cloaking of vested interests, of an unjust social order, of political and military alliances, under the guise of Christian words. Such confusion of things, unfortunately so long prevalent in the C. D. U. we oppose. But... if we wish to face this difficulty in a way that we do not give the Churches any occasion for

animosity against the S.P.D. then we should not counter the confusion of our political opponents with an analogous confusion on our part. Only if the S. P. D. does not set itself against the Churches, only if she gives to the Christian men and women who belong to them the possibility of acting in conformity with the Christian norms, only then will the Party be able to oppose with sincerity and efficacy any misuse of Christian doctrines..."

## ENGLAND

In a declaration on the aims of the Labour Party, published in the *Times*, March 17th 1960, we read that the Party favours planned national economy. This policy aims to secure full employment, the increase of production, stability in prices, a rapid progress in the standard of living and insists that any concentration of power must be subordinated to the interests of the whole community. Further, it defends industrial democracy and the right of the workers, both in the private and public sectors, to the most extensive consultations in all vital decisions regarding the welfare

of the industry and especially in those problems which touch more directly the life of the workers.

According to the same declaration the British Labour Party is a social-democratic party. Its main aim is human fraternity which must be realised everywhere. It, therefore, rejects any discrimination by race, colour or religious faith; it believes that all men should extend to each other mutual regard and respect in acknowledging the fundamental dignity of man. Since international anarchy and the struggle for power

could lead to universal destruction, the Party favours the establishment of a world order, in which all mankind can live in peace. It promises to respect the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, declared by the UNO to renounce the use of arms, except for legitimate defence; to work incessantly for disarmament and the abolition of nuclear weapons, and for the pacific solution of international controversies. The Party maintains that the richer nations have a duty to assist the poorer ones and that they are bound to use all means at their disposal to suppress poverty throughout the world. Social justice must be defended. In other words, there must be a society in which the necessities of those who are in distress and in need, should be recognised as having priority. The declaration also called for the equal sharing of wealth, without regard to birth and inheritance, on the basis of effort, intelligence and creative energy which they have contributed to the common good and for the establishment of a society in which there would be equal opportunity for all to lead a happy and diversified life.

### **Nationalisation**

One of the points in the Labour Programme, which has caused considerable argument and sharply divided opinion, is the problem of nationalization. The British mood at the moment is far from being well disposed towards state control and monopoly. The Labour Party has, therefore, been forced to disguise its position on state control, both in public propaganda during the election campaigns, and to a certain extent, in its declarations of policy at the Party Congress. The Party strongly defends its policy on nationalisation and many of the old guard still insist on the nationalisation of entire industries. In the face of public opinion, however, they have very carefully avoided declaring a fixed policy on this issue.

### **Public Property**

The Labour party is convinced that their social and economic objectives can be obtained only through such an extension of common property that would be sufficient to assure community control over powerful economic regimes. These extensions would include: State industries and enterprises, producer

and consumer co-operatives, municipal properties and public participation in private enterprise. Recognising that both public and private enterprise have a place in the economy of the country, the party believes that extensions in the realm of common property should, in each case, be decided in view of their objectives, and with regard to circumstances and the views of the workers and the consumers concerned.

### **Freedom**

The Party insists on the

freedom of the individual, agrees to protect the worker and consumer and all citizens against the arbitrary exercise of power either by the State or by private or public authority. Being a democratic party, it believes that there can be no Socialism without political liberty and, therefore, will conduct its political campaigns only through free democratic institutions which it will defend and protect against any threat.

## **FRANCE**

Between the two World Wars French Socialism faced three important crisis. The first was due mainly to the Russian Revolution. Leading French socialists were opposed to the First Great War and wanted to follow the example of their Russian counterparts. The result was that three quarters of the members of the S. F. I. O. (Section Francaise de Internationale Ouvriere) left the party. This crisis revealed one of the principle stumbling blocks of socialism, namely, national resistance to policies of governing the advancement

of international socialism. The second crisis of 1933 was largely due to the rise of Fascism and the establishment of autocratic regimes in Europe. The theory of systematic opposition to established government was opposed by many who thought that Socialism had more to gain by participating in coalition governments.

The 1938 crisis came after the Socialists had been in power for two years. Some were discovering the limits of Socialism in a democratic system, while others were

determined on a revolutionary transformation of society. The non-interference in Spain, the fall of the Government of Blum, the Socialist failure to form a government gave rise to many misgivings. Marceau Pivert, who personified fidelity to the principles of Socialism, formed the "Parti Socialiste Ouvrier et Paysan". The Socialists who were opposed to democracy suffered another setback during the Second World War. The question they had to face was whether Hitler should be opposed while democracy gained strength. For the most part, French Socialists were spurred by patriotism and hatred of Nazi national socialism, and opposed the enemy. After the occupation the prestige of Socialism in France was greatly enhanced and Leo Blum felt justified in saying that he was master of the hour.

After World War II and the necessity to mould political ideologies to changing circumstances Socialism in France was faced with three alternatives :

Nationalism versus Internationalism.

Participation in political power versus systematic opposition.

Revisionism versus integral socialism.

Based on these problems three possible solutions could be adopted : to remain aloof and risk expansion, to collaborate with the democratic party though dominated by Christian ideology, or to merge with Communism for unity of purpose. Leon Blum chose the second solution and recommended a revision on two points ; materialism should be modified and corrected — class action should be substituted for class struggle. The 1946 Congress, however, rejected this proposal and the majority clearly pronounced itself in favour of maintaining traditional positions and Marxist orthodoxy. This ideological clash culminated a few months later in the expulsion of Communist ministers by the President of the Socialist government.

The Socialists now felt the growing need to participate in government policies and gradually broke away entirely from Communism. Since 1947 there have been fewer ideological differences within the



party. Their doctrinal programmes do not even mention any longer 'property distribution', and 'nationalisation' has apparently been shelved, or only admitted to maintain its present level.

### New Concepts

Two recent authors, Andre Philip (*Le Socialisme trahi*, 1957) and Jules Moch (*Socialisme vivant*, 1960), have been notable for their incisive and suggestive reflections on the present state and prospect of Socialism in France.

Andre Philip observes :

"...We are no longer facing a simple differentiation of classes, as Marx thought..... From none of the actual groups can spring an ideology capable of defining Socialism.... Socialism is today an ideal of life, a common value, a civilization of work...."

And since this expression was susceptible to ambiguity, the author carefully added

"...This common value is not a result of an adaptation to the situation by a particular class. It is the will to overcome the interests of a group in the name of a determined

ethic. This ethic does not derive from the struggle of interests or power, as they are verified in the capitalistic society and under its influence; it proceeds rather from a moral judgement prior to any historical experience..."

Since Andre Philip is no more a member of the S.F.I.O., one might be tempted to disregard such a statement. But Jules Moch, who is in the S.F.I.O. is just as firm in toning down the traditional theory of the opposition of the classes. According to him the main defect of the economic system of today is due to 'social waste', which can only effectively be absorbed through planning. It should be understood therefore that

"...in the democratic states, if Socialism hopes to undertake the Government, it is obliged to seek alliance with elements that do not belong to the workers classes; and thus its propaganda should focus around a moral ideal, more than around class struggles..."

"...In order to free man from all oppression, it is necessary to put an end to the retention or control of economic power by a privileged minority..."

## **Means of Production**

It is true, Jules Moch still speaks of collective property, when private property becomes a source of oppression and opposes the general interest. He clarifies this by saying

"...when certain modern processes of capitalism allow the artificial dissociation of material property from the power which it procures, and when the power becomes now the cause of oppression, then the collectivity must be assured strict control over such power. The problem of property is not everything; it is not even the most important in the present situation..."

**Andre Philip is even more emphatic on this point**

"...The appropriation by the collectivity of the means of production is not a necessary element in the definition of Socialism — indeed — Nationalisation and planning are not enough to solve the social question, nationalisation in many cases is not even necessary. Today in the cases in which property is only one of the possible forms of power, the transfer of property is only one of the means to realise the transfer of authority. The

problem of management supersedes that of property, and the modifications of the regime of property are functions of the authority that is required in a system of direct economy..."

## **Conclusion**

Is there a crisis in the socialist ideology today? This seems to be the case as far as one can judge. No doubt, compared to the triumphs of 1936 and to the victory of 1945, Socialism has lost much of its popularity. But is the ideological crisis in Socialism peculiar to the three countries we have considered or does it affect all modern democracies and industrial societies? One thing is certain: the characteristic features defining socialism have changed. What was formerly the great hope of the masses is today a habit of thought and action, a tradition, almost a routine and often an achieved realisation. Socialist ideals have been incorporated into general political life, perhaps to the great detriment of Socialism itself. Socialism was born with a radical spirit which still inspires its programmes, even when the radicalism has lost its bite in the strictly socio-economic sphere. But the spirit of radicalism is older

than Socialism. Many Socialists however despite their idealistic attitudes in practical sectors, still betray traces of it. Finally Socialism is not without its dangers to the believer, especially if he is a Catholic. For Socialism still clings to a system of social relationships that has not shed its outlook of a general dis-

trust of property, its materialistic concern with increasing production, (as if this were the sole purpose of human existence), and a conceited pride in the boast that man suffices to himself and can improve the world without the assistance of morality and the Divinity.

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## INDIAN SOCIALISM

L. Rodricks

During the civil disobedience movement of 1932 large members of Congressmen found themselves in jail and among these were Jayaprakash Narayan, M. R. Masani, Achyut Patwardhan, Asoka Mehta, and other leftists, who conceived the creation of the 'Congress Socialist Party'. On May 17th, 1934 the first all India conference of the Socialists was convened in Patna under the chairmanship of Acharya Narendra Deva with J. P. Narayan as Secretary, and a draft programme and constitution laid out. On October 22nd, 1934 the CSP was

formally launched with the declared objective of 'the achievement of complete independence, in the sense of separation from the British Empire, and the establishment of a Socialist society'.

J. P. Narayan, not only became one of the founders of the CSP but so influenced Indian Socialism that the party policy was almost an exact reflection of his personal convictions. On his return from America in 1929, Narayan was an out and out Marxist and this characteristic was made explicit in party policy when it declared at

its Meerut Conference on January 20th, 1936—'Marxism alone can guide the anti-imperialist forces to their ultimate destiny. Party members must, therefore, fully understand the technique of revolution, the theory and practice of class struggle, the nature of the state and the processes leading to the Socialist society'. The CSP, though functioning within the framework of the Congress Party, had as its objective the splitting up of the Congress and the formation of a united party of all Socialist tendencies.

### ***The CSP and Communism***

Perhaps it was this dream that influenced J. P. Narayan in allowing Communists to join the CSP, the more so since they were ideologically allied. This move proved to be a major blunder and almost destroyed the CSP. Though enough proof of the real intentions of the Communists was available in the form of secret documents, wherein it was clear that they (the Communists) intended eventually assimilating the CSP it was only in 1940 that the CSP Executive expelled them. In the meantime, through joining the CSP, the

Communists gained control of the major trade unions, penetrated into the Congress Party and were so disruptive as to cause Purshottam Trikamdas, General Secretary in 1940 to say of this period: 'It was a bad dream, a nightmare; let us forget it and get on with the task.'

### ***The War and After***

During the war the Socialists were adamant against any compromise with the British and pushed the Congress into adopting the 'Quit India' resolution in August 1942. With Congress and Socialist leaders in jail due to this movement, the field was clear for parties prepared to be co-operative with the Government. The Communists, who were one of these parties after Germany attacked Russia, took over the AITUC completely.

The revival of the CSP after the war was slow and it was only in 1946 that the ban on the party was lifted. Their first post-war conference was held at Kanpur from February 28th to March 1st 1957. General policy moved away from Marxism to Democratic Socialism and the party name was changed

to the Socialist Party of India; membership of the Congress as a pre-condition for the membership of the Socialist Party of India was removed.

### ***Break with Congress***

Gandhiji had been anxious to keep the Socialists in the Congress. He proposed J. P. Narayan or Narendra Deva for President of the Congress in 1946. By the time of the next Socialist conference, held at Nasik on March 19—21, 1948 India was independent and Gandhiji was dead. The parting of the ways was not far off. The break came from the Congress, who after independence, transformed itself from a national movement into a political party. In the new constitution a clause for membership stated that members to the party would be accepted provided they belonged to no other party or group with a separate constitution and programme.

The break with the Congress was not the only change made at the Nasik Conference. J. P. Narayan in his report, indicated an evolution in his thinking and turning towards Gandhism — he says — . . . .  
“There were many things that

Mahatma Gandhi taught us. But the greatest thing he taught us was that means are ends, that evil means can never lead to good ends and that fair ends require fair means. Some of us may have been sceptical of this truth but recent world events and events at home have convinced me that nothing but good means will enable us to reach the goal of a good society, which is socialism. . . .” His complete rejection of the view held by some that the capture of the state was essential for the service of society is contradictory to his earlier views that “...no party in the world of today can build up Socialism unless it has the machinery of the State in its hands. . . .”

The Socialist Party drew the logical conclusion of its decision to leave the Congress and constitute itself the democratic opposition: it altered its constitution from selective membership to mass organization. Under the new constitution adopted at its Patna Conference in March 1949, the party was thrown open to anyone who believed in the principles of democratic Socialism, did not believe in or observe caste distinctions, and

promised to abide by party discipline.

### ***Opposition Party***

During the first General Elections, on the basis of its platform "We Build for Socialism" and the successes obtained in by-elections in Bombay City and Travancore-Cochin, the Socialists went into the general elections with high hopes. The intention was not to defeat the Congress, but to emerge clearly as the opposition. 'We build for Socialism' was a 50 page document beginning with an indictment of the 'barren record' of the Congress and proceeding to state party policy. Pride of place was given to problems of the land. It proposed a Land Volunteer Corps to make improvements which would increase the yield per acre, and a Food Army composed of the landless and the poor to reclaim and colonize waste lands.

Zamindari was to be abolished, cultivators would be guaranteed security of tenure and the land to belong to the tiller, no family being allowed more than 30 acres. Co-operatives were to be formed, agricultural under-

employment remedied by the development of rural industries and public works. The State would provide seeds, implements, marketing facilities, cheaper finance, technical assistance and research centres. The State itself would be reorganised on a 'four pillar' basis — the Village, Region, State and Union. The Panchayat would have a pivotal place, representing the Government in local affairs and would form the base of the pyramid.

Industry was to be divided into three sectors : the nationalised sector, the medium scale private sector, and the small scale co-operative sector. Key industries such as iron, steel electric power, etc., were to be nationalized and run by regional public corporations or by municipal enterprises. There would be workers' participation in management and the State would be responsible for social security. Such in outline was the economic programme which the Socialist Party placed before the electorate. It constituted three quarters of the platform, the remainder of which dealt with social mobility, women, minorities, social welfare, consti-

tutional changes and foreign policy.

J. P. Narayan, during this period, was turning more and more to Gandhism and *Sarvodaya*. He went so far as to declare that if the Congress were willing to accept *Sarvodaya* he would advise the Socialist Party to rejoin the Congress.

The Socialists lost the elections, and it was the Communists and their allies who emerged as second to the Congress both in the House of the People and in the total result in the State Assemblies.

### ***The Praja Socialist Party***

The Political Resolution adopted by the May 1952 Pachmarhi Convention contained a favourable reference to co-operation between the party and the *sarvodaya* movement, advocated by both Lohia and Narayan. The latter had referred to Vinoba Bhave as 'the spark of the revolutionary force of Gandhism' — 'If this spark and the Socialist Party can combine, it can shake up the whole country and start a big conflagration against injustice'. Lohia here suggested another attempt at an alliance with the Kisan Mazdoor Praja

Party; a previous attempt just before the elections having failed. The KMPP was a group led by Acharya J. B. Kripalani, formerly General Secretary of the Congress and President in 1946, who broke away from the party before the elections and succeeded in taking fourth place in the election results. The KMPP too espoused *sarvodaya*.

Representatives of the Socialist Party met the KMPP leaders soon after the Pachmarhi conference on June 1st, at Delhi, where it was decided to make every effort to bring about a merger. On September 27th, 1952 the merger was approved and a joint statement issued with the hope that the fusion of the KMPP and the Socialist Party, to be known as the Praja Socialist Party, would set up a massive block of 'radicalism and socialism'. Kripalani was elected Chairman with Asoka Mehta as General Secretary of the new National Executive. The party could now claim 17 million votes and displaced the Communist party from the position of holding the second largest number of seats in the State Assemblies. The Subhasist Forward Bloc joined the new party soon after the merger.

### **Attempt at Co-operation**

Early in 1953 Prime Minister Nehru approached J. P. Narayan and expressed a desire for co-operation. The party immediately split in two, Mehta and Narayan in favour and Narendra Deva, Kripalani and Lohia opposed. This was brought to a head at the Betul Convention of June 18th 1953 where Asoka Mehta tabled a policy of collaboration based on common policy apparent in the two parties. In opposition to this Lohia took a leading part. Criticism of party leadership was so strong that Narayan, Mehta and the Joint Secretaries submitted their resignations; they were, however, persuaded to remain in office. At the same time the PSP was being torn in another direction. Narayan, who played a leading role in the abortive negotiations for collaboration with the Congress, had moved further towards bhoodan, having joined the movement in 1952. He justified his approach on the basis of the need for goodwill and agreement and further made a moving appeal for the PSP to plunge into the bhoodan movement. The party now split between the collaborationists and oppositionists,

and between those who accepted and those who were critical of the bhoodan movement. Narayan, soon after, dedicated his life to the cause of bhoodan, and though remaining a party member, withdrew from active politics.

### **The Split**

After the Travancore-Cochin 'Socialist Ministry' fiasco which ended in a riot and the death of four people, a split in the PSP was almost a certainty. Lohia, in jail at that time, bitterly opposed the Ministry (Congress supported) and asked for their resignation. The U. P. party backed him and Limaye who was already suspended. In defiance of the National Executive the U. P. Party invited Limaye to inaugurate its annual conference. They were promptly suspended, and in July, Lohia followed suit. A new party was formed of this leadership which called itself the 'Socialist Party' on the pattern of the old CSP. Ironically, immediately after the split both parties confirmed a policy of non-collaboration and opposition to the Congress. To add to the confusion Narayan in July 1956 advised the



PSP to follow a policy of alignment with other opposition parties, in other words, the Communists. This was in absolute contradiction to his previous policy of co-operation which had first caused a split within the PSP. It should be remembered that Narayan was not an active member and only offered this advice to keep going an active and powerful enough Opposition. He resigned from the party in 1957.

In the 1957 general elections, the PSP failed again to establish themselves as the major opposition party. Their failure was due to constant vacillation in policy matters and perhaps, the electorate found it difficult to understand the difference between

Socialist Socialism and Communist and Congress Socialism. If voters wanted to register opposition from the Right, there were the Jan Sangh and kindred parties. If they wanted to register opposition from the Left, they turned more readily to the Communists than to the Socialists.

This reflects one of the great difficulties facing the Socialists not merely of India but of much of Asia — the problem of differentiation. As with the Liberals and Liberalism in Britain so also in India 'Socialism' is widely accepted and 'Socialist' is an adjective of approval while paradoxically being a liability, not an asset, to the India Socialist Party.

### **DRAFT MANIFESTO OF THE PSP**

#### ***Draft Manifesto of the PSP***

The Draft Manifesto of the PSP is an important document inasmuch as it reveals the trends of Indian Socialism today.

#### ***Frontier and Home***

The Party strikes a strong note on the necessity of preserving India's territorial integrity. "Vast tracts of soil", they complain, "experience the humiliation of alien occupation". The people have

rallied to the defence of the country, but leadership from the Government has been vacillating and tardy.

Similarly on the home front, despite the promises of the great goal of establishing a 'socialist pattern of society' the Government's policy has led to national disintegration.

#### ***Equality, Security and Participation***

The Socialists offer the people equality of income and

opportunity. The only differentials permissible will be those based on skill, responsibility, initiative and output. Secondly, they promise economic and social security; and thirdly, participation in making decisions in economic life, which determine the direction of production and the pattern of distribution of the national product.

On these three foundations, the people will tend to unify in defence of the nation. Further, planning should be done not only at the apex but also at the lowest levels. In other words, democratically organised district administration should be the principal unit of economic planning.

### **Highlights**

In the agricultural sphere, assistance will be weighed in favour of rehabilitating the six crores of village poor whose per capita income today hovers around 25 naya paisa per day. By providing the needed inducements and incentives the holders of dwarf holdings will be invited into co-operatives. Through rural re-development projects, rural housing will be improved. The PSP believes it imperative to involve the

rural people in the process of industrialisation.

Investment, not in capital, but in labour has to be the crucial technique of development. In totalitarian countries such investment is imposed and extracted. In democratic India it will be achieved through diffusion of equality, provision of incentives, and creation of administrative and economic institutions wherein the people share power and shape objectives.

The party is in favour of encouraging new enterprises, of compelling big industries to farm out considerable work to small producers brought together in industrial estates. In view of the acute shortage of capital, our industrial and labour equipment should be used to full capacity. There should be co-determination in industry. In general, the party favours the break-up of giant corporations in the public sector, the encouragement of competition within that sector, skilled management and trained labour force.

### **Minorities**

All minorities must have an equal right to participate in all spheres of social economic and political life.

Simultaneously they will have the right to practise their religion, organise educational institutions and cultural associations for promotion of their language, script and literature. Such institutions will be entitled to state aid. Where linguistic minorities form a suitable proportion, education would be imparted in the mother tongue, while the regional language, with the national language, will be taught side by side.

### **Economic Democracy**

The PSP demands the right of free association for wage and salary workers and Government employees. They believe that only strong autonomous and democratic unions can enable the worker to be the pace-setter of economic development and social transformation. To ensure industrial peace, they would have to devise quick, inexpensive impartial and permanent negotiation and arbitration machinery, establish inviolable codes of conduct,

and build up social and moral pressures against misuse of strength. Mere legislation will not do.

### **Foreign Policy**

The PSP has always been in favour of an independent foreign policy for the country. Non-involvement in power blocs is a good thing only so long as the vital interests of the nation are safe. But the policy of non-alignment does not mean for the PSP condoning international injustice or oppression. A firm uncompromising stand must be taken on such occasions.

The Manifesto is a reflection of the evolution of Socialist thought abroad and its effect on Indian Socialists. Much of the former fire and enthusiasm for the cause of the Socialist millenium seems to have faded away. What is left is a staid, cautious document that threads its way carefully between 'etatism' or statism and the old liberalist concept of economic life.

## **SOCIALISM & THE CONGRESS PARTY**

To complete the picture of the evolution of non-Marxist Socialism in India, it is necessary to add a brief reference to the Indian National Con-

gress Party and its brand of Socialism. Ever since 1936, when Jawaharlal Nehru was elected President of the Congress Party, he has dominated

Congress policy and injected his own brand of democratic socialism into its programme. Even at that early stage, he showed a political flexibility by not committing himself entirely to a fixed ideology, and in his address to Congress he said, "I imagine that every country will fashion it (socialism) after its own way and fit it in with its national genius."

### ***Framework for Socialist Pattern***

After Independence, the policy of the Congress can be traced in the Five Year Plans. The purpose of the First Five Year Plan was the establishment of Socialism within a democratic framework, based on the Directive Principles of the Constitution, that guaranteed to every citizen the right to adequate means of livelihood, and desired that the ownership and control of the material resources of the Community should be so distributed as best to subserve the common good, and finally that the operation of the economic system did not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production in the hands of a few.

### ***Socialist Pattern***

It was in December, 1954,

that Parliament adopted the slogan 'socialist pattern of society' as the objective of social and economic policy. Its meaning was more fully described in the Second Five Year Plan.

"...Essentially, this means that the basic criterion for determining lines of advance must not be private profit, but social gain, and that the pattern of development and the structure of socio-economic relations should be so planned that they result not only in appreciable increases in national income and employment but also in greater equality of incomes and wealth. Major decisions regarding production, distribution, consumption and investment — and in fact all significant socio-economic relationships — must be made — by agencies informed by a social purpose. The benefits of economic development must accrue more and more to the relatively less privileged classes of society, and there should be progressive reduction of the concentration of incomes, wealth and economic power.

"...The socialist pattern of society (however) is not to

be regarded as some fixed or rigid pattern. It is not rooted in any doctrine or dogma. Each country has to develop according to its own genius and traditions... It is neither necessary nor desirable that the economy should become a monolithic type of organisation offering little play for experimentation either as to forms or as to modes of functioning. Nor should expansion of the public sector mean centralisation of decision-making and of the exercise of authority. In fact, the aim should be to secure an appropriate devolution of functions and to ensure to public enterprises the fullest freedom to operate within a framework of broad directives or rules of the game."

"....The accent of the socialist pattern of society is on the attainment of positive goals, the raising of living standards, the enlargement of opportunities for all, the promotion of enterprise among the disadvantaged classes and the creation of a sense of partnership among all sections of the community."

#### **Practice**

In practice, the plans have

brought into being India's planned economy, the creation of the Public Sector, high rates of taxation and large borrowing of foreign capital to finance the plans. Steel, transport, power and fuel are mainly in the hands of the state. Large efforts have been made to industrialise the country rapidly by building up a strong base of the essential elements required to enable manufacture goods to be produced. Perhaps agriculture has suffered in the process despite the erection of dams for irrigation and electricity and factories for fertilisers. The Community Development Project is hampered by lack of trained personal and other administrative difficulties and the traditional conservatism of the peasant. But the private sector in industry has flourished and reaped the benefits of the plans more than any other sector.

#### **The Third Plan**

"The basic objective of India's development", says the Introduction to the Third Plan, "must necessarily be to provide the masses of the Indian people the opportunity to lead a good life." This can be done only by social

and economic advance, "so as to build up a technologically mature society and a social order that offers equal opportunities to all citizens. This involves basic social and economic changes and the replacing of the old traditional order by a dynamic society."

Some reference is made to the socialist pattern, but the emphasis is on the 'good life'. The objective of a socialist order still remains but it is expressed in different terms.

"Progress towards socialism", according to the Plan, "lies along a number of directions, each enhancing the value of the others. Above all, a socialist economy must be efficient, progressive in its approach to science and technology, and capable of growing steadily to a level at which the well — being of the mass of the population can be secured."

In an under-developed country this would mean :

- a high rate of economic progress and the development of a large public sector and a co-operative sector.
- provision for basic necessities (food, work, education, sanitation, etc.).
- reduction of social and economic inequalities and prevention of economic power being concentrated in or monopolized by a few.
- greatest stress on social values and incentives and the development of common interest and obligations among all sections of the community.

Thus for the Congress Party, Socialism has assumed a new connotation that covers a number of socially desirable goals and certain economic and social means to achieve them. The doctrinaire aspect so peculiar to Socialism elsewhere is missing. In practice, the tendency to rapid industrialisation through the public sector is often traced to Marxist inspiration, but the country needs to be industrialised, property to be widely distributed, and the fruits of increased prosperity to be shared by as many as possible. As it is, the problem of changing social attitudes and abolishing poverty is a herculean task, and there is no other agency but the Government that can undertake it.

# WHITHER INDIAN SOCIALISM ?

J. Boel

When we speak of Socialism today, it cannot always be said that the term we use has a clear and unambiguous meaning, for the simple reason that socialism has become almost like a slogan, a catchword that is being abused by political parties. Together with some of its derivatives — the Socialist Pattern of Society, Welfare State, etc., — it serves to cover up the most disparate systems of social organisation or disorganisation. And here lies the danger. Socialism has in many cases promoted social justice and aroused a genuine interest for the poor and depressed; at the same time, untold suffering and misery has been inflicted on entire populations — all in the name of Socialism.

## *Socialistic Pattern*

India aims at establishing a socialistic pattern of society. This in itself is a good thing provided the right brand of Socialism is adopted. Certain development schemes and

programmes have already caused grave concern to those who have studied their implications and consequences. There exists with many a feeling of uncertainty and doubt as to whether the country is heading towards true human progress and happiness. Ideas on this point should be clear so as to exclude the possibility of being misled and of falling victims to self-deception. What is needed is an exact knowledge of the principles that guide and underlie the country's planning in view of its development. Some serious thinking on this point is, therefore, imperative if we are to find an answer to certain questions that are too often discarded as being irrelevant to the pressing needs of every moment.

## *Indian Socialism*

Such an attempt has been made by the former Chief Minister of the U. P., Dr. Sampurnanand, in his book 'Indian Socialism'. The title

of the book is misleading since it leads the reader to expect one more commentary on the evolution and development of the Socialist parties and policies in our country. Instead as A. K. Banerji says "The approach is abstract and metaphysical, flexible and pragmatic, progressive and revivalist, for while it looks ahead to Indian Socialism, it also leans back on Indian Vedanta. Democracy, the elimination of class conflict but not of class, individual freedom in the abstract without the right to work being guaranteed and its obligation ensured, equality of opportunity, are all stressed as goals, as much as the achievement of *artha, kama, dharma and moksha*". Dr. Sampurnanand presents himself as 'one of those humble men who have been trying for some years to place before the Indian public some ideas which should form the foundation on which a system of Socialism should be based. These ideas have been incorporated in the book, but an immediate grasp of these ideas however becomes difficult as there is no progressive development of thought, and a lack of consistency and coherence. This does not

detract from the value of the book as a sound basis for discussion.

### **Marxian Socialism**

Despite the criticism, Dr. Sampurnanand knows his countrymen and feels impelled to discuss the philosophical foundations of Indian Socialism with particular regard to Communism. He states that the number of those who swear by Socialism is very large and adds '...most of these good people have a very hazy notion of what Socialism is... practically all that they know of Socialism is based on Marxism. Practical programmes like the abolition of zamindari and nationalisation of industries have attracted them. They have never worried themselves about philosophy or its practical implications...' As mentioned before, it is not enough to want a Socialistic pattern of society, but to know the type of Socialism one wants and to obtain this knowledge before it is too late.

In the opinion of the author, enthusiasm for Communism is on the wane due in particular to the suppression of the Hungarian revolt and China's violation of



India's territorial integrity which is causing much 'searching of heart' and a dissatisfaction with Communist ideology. He further states '...Communist thought is not satisfying and is likely to lead to a dictatorship which will crush both body and soul, if the citizen shows the least evidence of wishing to think for himself...' In the words of Prime Minister Nehru '...in spite of its apparent success, Communism fails, partly because of its rigidity, but, even more so, because it ignores certain essential needs of human nature. ....Its contempt for what might be called the moral and spiritual side of life, not only ignores something that is basic in man, but also deprives human behaviour of standards and values'. Many therefore, have begun to look out for a philosophy 'in which the highest spiritual values can find a place and which can inspire men with an evangelical zeal which could change the world'.

#### *Ideological identification*

We touch here upon another consideration that led Dr. Sampurnanand to write his book. He complains that zeal and enthusiasm for the task that lies ahead are

absent at a time when they cannot be dispensed with. '...Our leadership considers thought a luxury: it hopes to fight ideas with tubewells and culverts. We tend to equate welfare with bread and the material comforts which bread symbolises. And we are surprised if people do not respond to our calls for sacrifice. It is forgotten that the spirit of sacrifice and self-dedication is awakened only when a man identifies himself with something higher and greater than himself, an ideal that will not be reached by the kind of activities in which we indulge to satisfy our cravings on the material plane'. Mr. Nehru speaks of the sense of frustration in India and of the 'old buoyancy of spirit' that is not to be found at a time 'when enthusiasm and hard work are most needed'. This is due, an old and valued colleague told him 'to our not having a philosophy of life'. And he goes on: 'In our efforts to ensure the material prosperity of the country, we have not paid any attention to the spiritual element in human nature. Therefore, in order to give the individual and the nation a sense of purpose, something to live for

and, if necessary, to die for, we have to revive some philosophy of life and give, in the wider sense of the word, a spiritual background to our thinking'.

India is in an ideological ferment. The type of ideology many, including leaders of the Sarvodaya School, are looking for should be one that reconciles 'what might be called practical Socialism, the removal of exploitation and class privileges, with a better and high appreciation of man's personality'. These two elements, a new social structure and re-evaluation of each individual person within that social structure should never be kept apart. Tension may arise between what is considered to be the good of Society and that of the individual person. They can only be resolved on the basic assumption that Society exists for the individual and not the reverse. '...We talk, says Mr. Nehru, of a Welfare State and of Democracy and Socialism. They are good concepts, but... the question arose as to what our ultimate objective should be. Democracy and Socialism are means to an end, not the end itself. We talk of the good of society. Is this something

apart from and transcending the good of the individuals composing it? If the individual is ignored and sacrificed for what is considered the good of the society, is that the right objective to have?' All our attempts to remove poverty from our midst should never make us overlook the fact that in the final analysis, it is 'the quality of the human being that counts'. 'It is man that builds up the wealth of a nation, as well as its cultural progress'. This insistence on the inalienable rights of man is necessary. Many tend to grow impatient at the sight of poverty and backwardness among the masses. They want to accelerate the pace of progress and development so as to alleviate misery and suffering of large sections of the population. This consciousness of the need of others and even a certain revolt against the existing social order can easily be understood. One can only wish that many more could be more sensitive to what is happening around them. Sympathy with others is the first requisite for leadership. Yet it should always be kept in mind that 'Social good and uplift are instruments and not an end in

themselves'. The individual person, for the Indian Socialist, must remain 'the pivot around which everything else revolves'.

### **Man and Society**

This respect for the human person implies that one is resolved to adhere to moral conduct even if it does not seem to pay and 'when peace and the successful pursuit of the objectives of life can be secured by by-passing the path of strict morality'. This might lead to difficult situations and setbacks with regard to material progress and political issues, but 'mankind can afford to wait, confident in the belief that ultimate victory comes to him who does not falter in the pursuit of *dharma*'. A certain control over production and distribution will be necessary but policies and programmes have to be shaped 'so as to derive the maximum benefit from science and technology without depriving man of the innate freedom of his personality'. It is possible that under a dictatorial regime people will reach a fairly high material standard of life in a relatively short time. But this will have been achieved at the cost of individual free-

dom, the individual being reduced to an automaton. It is for this reason that the Indian Socialist does not believe in any kind of dictatorship and 'will stand for democracy, a scheme of things in which there will be freedom to criticise those in office... in which speech will be free and thought under no restraint to conform to the opinions of those in office'.

This emphasis on the rights of the individual might seem to have led far away from the initial purpose of this enquiry, which consists in finding a philosophical basis or ideology for Indian Socialism. The reason is that the approach that has been taken so far needs completion. As pointed out before, there will be no social progress in the true sense of the term without safeguarding the person's rights and human dignity. But it is equally true that for the development of his human personality, man stands in need of society. Social living is essential to him. Essential because it forms part of his very being.

### **Giving and Receiving**

Whether as a child or an adolescent or a grown up

person, man always needs other men if he wants to grow, live and develop. This law of human nature is only too easily borne out by everyday experience. But here again we must avoid an over-simplification of the issue. The child is helpless without its mother. It needs her warmth and affection and care. It receives from her all that is required to live and grow. But it is equally true to say that the mother needs her child to fondle and caress. She 'needs' her child to be a mother. This fact, too often overlooked, provides us with a rational basis for our social relationship with, and service to others. For what has been said of the relationship between mother and child and the 'need' of one for the other, applies with equal strength to the wider sphere of all social intercourse. Every individual is a bundle of needs and ambitions and for their satisfaction he asks for, and receives, the help and services of innumerable other people around. If in the process of receiving, his human dignity remains unimpaired, he will also feel compelled to satisfy the urge to *give*; to render service to others and to society. Perhaps

much of the resentment felt by the unemployed is due to this feeling of frustration and disappointment and the lack of opportunity for being constructive.

When, therefore, it is said that the individual person cannot live without the help of society, the words used might easily be misunderstood. Society not only helps the person by extending assistance and services when required, but also presents an opportunity to develop in the person the need of others to be able to render service to them. The growth of his personality will depend on whether this 'need' for others, in its full significance, has found full satisfaction.

### **Social Role**

Dr. Sampurnanand devotes a few paragraphs to this social role of the human person. Being unable to give a more complete statement of his ideas of this aspect of person-society relationship, he seems to think of the existence of 'others' in too negative way. Man, he argues, soon comes to realize that he cannot satisfy his urges freely, "irrespective of what happens around him. The others have

similar urges and there are bound to be severe clashes... An element of self-restraint has to be introduced". He is led to accept in his pursuit of security and prosperity, the cooperation of others realizing "that the best way to serve one's own interests is to serve the interests of others, that the performance of duty is better than the insistence on rights".

The inference of this philosophy seems to mean that duty controls freedom. That man *can't* help helping others! — that he has to do his duty whether he likes or not! and that in the final analysis he is not free to do his duty? But hasn't it also been said that freedom means "the right to do one's duty"?

#### ***Devoted Service by All***

The author further states that for men of 'exceptional intelligence' "the performance of duty in as wide a sphere as one's intellect can compass the rendering unto others of what one owes to them, becomes a derivative but prime objective of life". Does this mean that unselfish service is a privilege of a few highly intellectual men? Or has it to be understood in the sense that only a privileged few

consciously accept the performance of their duty as the prime objective of their lives? We well know from experience that there are many simple people who are not at all so intellectually gifted and yet are devoted to the service of their neighbours.

#### ***Society and Person***

Indian Socialism has to be built on a right understanding of the true nature of both society and the human person. If on the one hand society has to safeguard and respect the individual person, it should, on the other hand, not be afraid of calling upon him to assume his responsibilities for the welfare of all. If this is done by persuasion, placing before the person such motives capable of inducing him to give a *free* response, his personality will grow along with that of others even when private interests have to be forgone. For the 'richest' personalities are not to be found among those that pursue their own interests disregarding that of others. It is those that are ready to give themselves to the service of others that realise their 'true self', while helping others and society to build a future where there will be happiness for all.

# THE CHURCH AND SOCIALISM

A. Fonseca

What has been the teaching of the Popes with regard to Socialism? The answer to this question will be found chiefly in the Social Encyclicals where the Popes have incidentally spoken of Socialism in refuting errors and setting forth official Catholic teaching on the social question.

## ***Rerum Novarum***

In this encyclical, published in 1891, Pope Leo XIII rejected the solution proposed by both Marxian Socialism and Agrarian Socialism.

## ***Marxian Socialism***

Regarding Marxian Socialism, the Pope says, :-

"To remedy these wrongs (social injustices and the exploitation of human labour) the Socialists, working on the poor man's envy of the rich, are striving to do away with private property, and contend that individual possessions should become the common property of all, to be adminis-

tered by the state or municipal bodies. They hold that by thus transferring property from private individuals to the community, the present mischievous state of things will be set to rights, inasmuch as each citizen will then get his fair share of whatever there is to enjoy. But their contentions are so clearly powerless to end the controversy that were they carried into effect, the working man himself would be among the first to suffer. They are moreover emphatically unjust, for they would rob the lawful possessor, distort the functions of the State, and create utter confusion in the community".

"Socialists, therefore, by endeavouring to transfer the possessions of individuals to the community at large, strike at the interests of every wage earner, since they would deprive him of the liberty of disposing of his wages, and thereby of

all hope and possibility of increasing his resources and of bettering his conditions in life ”.

### **Agrarian Socialism**

Regarding Agrarian Socialism, the Pope writes:-

“ They (The Agrarian Socialists) assert that it is right for private persons to have the use of the soil and its various fruits, but that it is unjust for any one to possess outright either the land on which he has built, or the estate which he has brought under cultivation. But those who deny these rights do not perceive that they are defrauding man of what his own labour has produced. For the soil which is tilled and cultivated with toil and skill utterly changes its condition; it was wild before, now it is fruitful; was barren, but now brings forth in abundance. That which has altered and improved the land becomes so truly part of itself as to be in great measure indistinguishable and inseparable from it. Is it just that the fruit of man's own sweat and labour should be possessed and enjoyed by any one else? As effects follow their cause, so it is just

and right that the results of labour should belong to those who have bestowed their labour ”.

### **Quadragesimo Anno**

In *Quadragesimo Anno*, published in 1931, Pope Pius XI draws attention to the many changes that have taken place in Socialism, since the days of Leo XIII, when it “ could still be termed a single system, which defended certain definite and mutually coherent doctrines. Nowadays it has in the main become divided into two opposing and often bitterly hostile camps, neither of which, however, has abandoned the principle peculiar to Socialism, namely opposition to the Christian Faith ”.

### **Moderate Type**

After condemning the Communist type of Socialism, the Pope discusses the more moderate section. He says :

“ The other section, which has retained the name of Socialism, is much less radical in its views. Not only does it condemn recourse to physical force; it even mitigates and moderates to some extent class warfare and the abolition of private property. It does

not reject them entirely. It would seem as if Socialism were afraid of its own principles and of the conclusions drawn therefrom by the Communists, and in consequence were drifting towards the truth which Christian tradition has always held in respect; for it cannot be denied that its programmes often strikingly approach the just demands of Christian social reformers”.

He then continues:

“It must not be imagined however that all the Socialist sects or factions which are not Communist have in fact or in theory uniformly returned to this reasonable position. For the most part they do not reject class warfare and the abolition of property, but merely are more moderate in regard to them. Now when false principles are thus mitigated and in some sense waived, the question arises, or is unwarrantably proposed in certain quarters, whether the principles of Christian truth also could not be somewhat moderated and attenuated, so as to meet Socialism, as it were, half-way upon common

ground. Some are engaged by the empty hope of gaining in this way the Socialists to our cause. But such hopes are vain...”.

#### *Catholic Compromise?*

And he asks the further question:

“But what if, in questions of class war and private ownership, Socialism were to become so mitigated and amended, that nothing reprehensible could any longer be found in it. Would it by that very fact have laid aside its character of hostility to the Christian religion? This is a question which holds many minds in suspense; and many are the Catholics who, realising clearly that Christian principles can never be either sacrificed or minimized, seem to be raising their eyes towards the Holy See, and earnestly beseeching Us to decide whether or not this form of Socialism has retracted so far its false doctrines that it can now be accepted without the loss of any Christian principle, and be baptized into the Church. In our fatherly solicitude We desire to satisfy these petitions, and We pronounce as follows: whether Social-



ism be considered as a doctrine, or as a historical fact, or as a movement, if it really remain Socialism, it cannot be brought into harmony with the dogmas of the Catholic Church, even after it has yielded to truth and justice in the points We have mentioned ; the reason being that it conceives human society in a way utterly alien to Christian truth.

#### ***Christian Doctrine and Socialism***

"According to Christian doctrine, Man, endowed with a social nature, is placed here on earth in order that he may spend his life in society, and under an authority ordained by God, that he may develop and evolve to the full all his faculties to the praise and glory of his Creator ; and that, by fulfilling faithfully the duties of his station, he may attain to temporal and eternal happiness. Socialism, on the contrary, entirely ignorant or unconcerned about this sublime end both of individuals and of society, affirms that living in community was instituted merely for the

sake of advantages which it brings to mankind.

"Goods are produced more efficiently by a suitable distribution of labour than by the scattered efforts of individuals. Hence the Socialists argue that economic production, of which they see only the material side, must necessarily be carried on collectively, and that because of this necessity men must surrender and submit themselves wholly to society with a view to the production of wealth. Indeed the possession of the greatest possible amount of temporal goods is esteemed so highly, that man's higher goods, not excepting liberty, must, they claim, be subordinated and even sacrificed to the exigencies of efficient production. They affirm that the loss of human dignity, which results from these socialized methods of production, will be easily compensated for by the abundance of goods produced in common and accruing to the individual who can turn them at his will to the comforts and culture of life.

#### ***Socialist Society***

"Society therefore, as the Socialist conceives it, is on

the one hand, impossible and unthinkable without the use of compulsion of the most excessive kind; on the other, it fosters a false liberty, since in such a scheme no place is found for true social authority, which is not based on temporal and material advantages, but descends from God alone, the Creator and Last end of all things”.

And he finally concludes:

“No one can at the same time be a sincere Catholic and a true Socialist”.

### ***In Recent Times***

The surprising changes in the respective manifestoes of the Socialist parties in Europe, especially of the German Social Democratic Party at Bad Godesburg, has brought to the fore the question of whether Catholics can now join the Socialist Party. No explicit papal pronouncements were made on the subject, but a couple of articles appeared in the *Observatore Romano* entitled ‘Catholics and Socialists’ in January and April 1960. Since the *Observatore Romano* is generally considered to be an official mouthpiece of Vatican opinion, the articles have received

the consideration they should merit as coming from such a reliable source.

### ***Catholics and Socialists***

The first article discusses the so-called ‘conversion’ of the Socialist parties in both Western Germany and Austria as manifested in the Bad Godesburg programme. The judgement of the author is none too favourable. The rejection of many fundamental assumptions of Marx and Lenin, the conciliatory references to private property and the Churches, and the toning down of the ‘class struggle’, are looked upon as part of Lenin’s famous ‘tactics’ to woo Catholic and Protestant support. The author observes that the label ‘Socialism’ still remains, and so does the inspiration. He even goes so far as to say that the change in the party programme at Bad Godesburg only reveals how easily the Socialists can revise their programme at the next party conference. In the light of the condemnation by Pius XI of moderate Socialism these further changes in Socialist ideology are not to be accepted as indications of a Socialist change of heart.

### **Suspicions confirmed**

These strictures might seem severe, but the second article which appeared a few months later, confirm to some extent the suspicions of the first. A book, entitled 'The Catholic and the Social Democrat Party' written by Herbert Wehrner appeared in West Germany. It was an invitation to Catholics to join the Socialist Party in view of the revised Socialist programme. Wehrner tried to show point by point the close agreement between the Socialist programme and the social teaching of Pius XI. But the writer of the *Observatore Romano* article was not convinced. There still remained no definite and explicit break with Marxism. The appeal to Christian ethics as the ground from which Socialism sprang and the respect for the free exercise of religion appeared to be mere 'cliches' to attract votes. Moreover they could be understood in a variety of senses, and interpreted as one pleased. There were still strong expressions of belief that man alone without divine aid could build up a new world. Moreover Wehrner was a Communist who had spent many years in the USSR before returning to Germany. Finally, the Socialists had not proved their

good will. As far as Catholic education was concerned, the clauses of the Concordat with the Federal Republic were not being observed by the States and the districts where the Socialists had the majority. Further, Catholics in these regions still suffered from discrimination because of their faith. The Socialist desire for unity and support was therefore rejected.

These two articles have not been repudiated by the Vatican. Indeed although a new encyclical on the Social Question has been published, there is no mention of Socialism or any trend towards establishing a better understanding with the Social Democratic parties. The Pope does speak about what he terms 'socialisation' but there is no reference to Socialism as such. Nor has 'socialisation' anything to do with doctrinaire Socialism.

### **Labour Party**

One point that the articles in the *Observatore Romano* make clear is that the British Labour Party does not fall within the category of 'Socialist Party' for in the words of the author, 'the Labour Party is not a socialist party in the real sense of the term'. It is obvious therefore that the Socialist Parties referred

to are those that have flourished on the Continent and been deeply influenced by Marx and the deeply anti-religious tendencies of the French Revolution and the age of Enlightenment. Many Catholics, especially workingmen, are prominent members of the British Labour Party. They have never been censored by the Hierarchy for their affiliation to the Party.

### **Indian Socialism**

In India, there are several political parties that go by the name 'Socialist'. Besides the Praja Socialist Party, which leans towards moderation and has well-known leaders, there are the Socialist Party of India, led by Dr. Lohia, and the Revolutionary Socialist Party, which has a following in West Bengal and Kerala. The Praja Socialist Party, whose draft manifesto has been discussed in the preceding pages, though originally leftist at the time of its organisation, has veered away from Communism to a large extent. Many of its leaders have fallen under the spell of Gandhiji's influence, which

stressed the importance of the spiritual. Because of our country's long connection with the British, the attitudes and theoretical insight of the Labour Party of England have moulded the thought and behaviour of both the Socialist wing in the Congress Party and the Praja Socialist Party.

For all these reasons it seems very probable that like the British Labour Party, the Praja Socialist Party would not fall within the category of 'Socialism' condemned in the encyclical. Similarly the Socialist Party of India, though bitterly anti-Congress, agrees to a large extent with the P. S. P. programme. But the Revolutionary Socialist Party is so pink that one can hardly distinguish it from the deep crimson that characterises Communism. Catholic adherence to such parties of similar hue could hardly be justified in the light of papal teaching. Obviously it is impossible for the Church to give directions in every single case; only the guiding principles can be laid down and this is what the Popes have done.

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